

**Silver Spring
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
January 14, 2010**

Abbreviations Used Herein Include:

TMP = Traffic Mitigation Plan

SFS = Super FareShare

TMD = Transportation Management District

SHA = State Highway Administration

Item 1, 2 – Introductions /Review/ Approval of Minutes: Members introduced themselves. Minutes review and approval were tabled until February’s meeting.

Item 3 – Chair’s Comments: Co-Chair **Samantha Mazo** announced that **Councilmember Valerie Ervin** is available to meet with the Committee in February or March. Since February is an off month, **Ms. Mazo** wanted to know if members were willing to meet then, or remain with the regular schedule and meet in March. The committee decided to meet in February to better accommodate **Ms. Ervin** and not meet in March. **Mr. Carlson** will send an email notification of the meeting change to all members.

In response to **Everton Latty’s** question about upcoming transportation issues, **Ms. O’Steen** said that there will be a hearing on February 1st regarding proposed Ride-On bus service cuts at 7:30 pm in the Executive Office Building, Rockville. The hearing will be simulcast and replayed on County Cable Montgomery Channel 6.

Item 4 – Updates: **Ms. Mazo** asked that regular updates be discussed ahead of other agenda items so that the balance of the meeting time is focused on budget priorities.

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Ms. O’Steen reported that companies with more than 25 or more employees in Silver Spring will receive the notification regarding submittal of Traffic Mitigation Plan (TMP) Annual Reports on January 29th. She urged Committee members to send in their responses as soon as possible after being notified. The reports will be due the end of February.

Mr. Carlson said the County Executive submitted his mid-year savings plan to Council, which proposed suspending the Super FareShare (SFS) programs in three of the County’s Transportation Management Districts (TMDs), excluding the Silver Spring TMD. However, Silver Spring will also likely be suspended but it is not known when.

This month, employers participating in SFS in the Bethesda, North Bethesda and Friendship Heights TMDs will not receive the County’s matching contribution toward employee SmartBenefits. Instead, they may opt to pay Metro directly for the full cost; or, as a convenience during this month’s orders, employers may pay the County, also at full cost, and have the County forward the payment to Metro. Metro will not accept checks

for SmartBenefits, only credit card or ACH wire transfers. Therefore, those companies that usually pay by check may still get their payment to Metro in time by paying through the County. Next month and for the remainder of the program suspension, employers will send payments directly to Metro for transit benefits.

In Silver Spring 35 companies (over 600 employees) will be affected by the suspension. **Mr. Carlson** said that feedback from employers has been mixed, with many employers choosing to pay the extra amount (the County's contribution); a few North Bethesda employers decided to drop SmartBenefits altogether.

Ms. O'Steen said that one way she can foresee SFS in Silver Spring remaining in place is if current SFS employers are allowed to stay in the program and then gradually grandfathering out as their nine-year terms end.

Ms. Gilbert suggested adding language keeping Silver Spring SFS in the budget priorities document – added to point three.

Mr. Carlson said he was meeting with **Reemberto Rodriguez**, Director of the Silver Spring Regional Services Center tonight in order to coordinate this Committee's budget priorities with those of the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Committee and Urban District Advisory Committee.

Ms. Mazo asked which bus routes in Silver Spring will be affected by the Ride On budget cutbacks. The 3, 21, 14 and 28 (VanGo), the teens and low twenties, which are all Silver Spring routes, will be affected. Most bus driver position eliminations are out of the Nicholson Court Depot. Silver Spring drivers come out of the Silver Spring/Brookville Road Depot.

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Mr. Tull said that the Citizens Advisory Board on Transportation and Safety is meeting on January 27th with State Highway Administration (SHA), County Dept. of Transportation and the Department of Housing and Community Affairs to discuss SHA projects and the interrelation of the other departments regarding the issue of pedestrian safety. The meeting will be held at the Roundhouse Theater Education center at 7 or 7:30 pm.

Mr. Latty described a document he circulated regarding alleviating traffic flow on Colesville Road between Spring Street and Georgia Avenue by rerouting traffic on Spring Street. **Ms. Mazo** suggested that the traffic congestion on Colesville Road may be more perceived than actual. **Mr. Tull** said that discussing smoother traffic flow along Colesville Road is beneficial for cars that are passing through so they can reach their destination without endangering the lives of pedestrians. This issue was explored in the past as part of the redevelopment process.

Mr. Wexler said that redirecting traffic on Colesville Road onto Spring Street will cause it to flow in one direction on Colesville, causing cars to speed.

Ms. Mazo suggested doing a pedestrian study to determine if the lane change will work.

Ms. Gilbert asked if the findings from the Pedestrian Safety Audit would address traffic congestion concerns on Colesville Road. **Mr. Wexler** said that the audit dealt with the Georgia Avenue corridor between Sligo Avenue and Spring Street; however, the state has a Notice to Proceed based on the audit's recommendations.

Item 5 – FY11 Budget Priorities: **Ms. Mazo** suggested that the County maintain funding for the VanGo. **Mr. Carlson** said he would get ridership numbers from **Phil McLaughlin**. The overall order for the FY11 budget priorities list was changed to:

1. Transit Operations
2. Pedestrian Safety and Bicycling Initiatives
3. Parking Operations
4. Financial Incentives for TMD Employers

Mr. Tull said increasing parking rates, in regard to the Parking Operations budget item, will be difficult because the two garages that service the redevelopment center have rates that are set by contract, and any other increases might put small businesses at a disadvantage because patrons may stop visiting businesses if they have to pay higher prices for parking. Other Committee members disagreed, stating that people tend to choose the shortest distance possible regardless of parking prices.

Mr. Tull said that some businesses in Silver Spring cannot afford to lose 10 percent of their business due to parking rate increases and perhaps the committee should focus on other priorities instead. **Ms. McGrew** suggested tying the parking issue with SFS to give business a stronger argument and also to save the SFS program in Silver Spring.

Ms. Mazo said that under Transit Operations the Committee needs to make a commitment to maintain the VanGo and Ride On bus service in Silver Spring. Also, the Frequency Improvements item should be changed to Retain Silver Spring Ride On bus routes. **Mr. Tull** added that with the opening of the new Transit Center the routes should be maintained because of the new space. **Mr. Carlson** said he would make the adjustments.

Mr. Carlson asked the committee to send their responses via email so he can have them ready for tonight's meeting with **Mr. Rodriguez** from the Regional Center.

The committee decided to remove the \$350,000 dollar amount from the Budget Implications bulleted item.

Ms. O'Steen suggested inserting, "...maintain SFS program and support continuation and extension of VanGo bus hours" after the phrase, "In order to improve the Parking Lot District's financial condition," stressing the budgetary increase of parking rates for SFS and VanGo programs. **Ms. O'Steen** also suggested continuing to fund the SFS program for current members and not advertising the program to new businesses.

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Under Pedestrian Safety and Bicycling Initiatives **Mr. Furgol** suggested changing the first sentence of the Fund, Implement, and Evaluate Pedestrian Safety Improvements, bullet point to "...the Committee endorses the County Executive's initiative in this area."

Under the bulleted item Comprehensive Bicycle Initiative for Silver Spring the Committee decided to add facilitating the connection of the Metropolitan Branch bike trail that goes into the District, make mention of the \$20 monthly federal stimulus package subsidy for bike upkeep, and changing the third sentence to reflect the importance of bicycling as a viable means of transportation and to upgrade biking facilities.

Mr. Wexler explained the Pedestrian Safety Audit recommendations that looked at the intersections on Georgia Avenue between Spring Street and Sligo Avenue. He suggested the Committee add to the Budget Priorities that the County Executive support the audit recommendations with funding.

Due to time constraints, **Mr. Carlson** reiterated to members who had to leave that he will circulate a word document so additional comments can be submitted.

Item 5, Silver Spring Transit Center-Interim Operations Site, was removed.

Ms. Mazo suggested adding Mr. Latty's earlier remarks regarding changing directional traffic flow on Colesville and Spring Streets to Item 6 Traffic Operations. **Robin Goudy** in reference to the sentence, "Adequate funding for towing operations in the TMD should be provided." asked if the committee knew the figure amount for towing operations in the TMD.

Ms. McGrew said that Traffic Operations should tie into Pedestrian Safety initiatives and parking garage maintenance, because cars that are double parked or in expired meter spaces cause difficulties to traffic flow.

Mr. Wexler said that Item 6 could be deleted if enforcement language was strengthened in Pedestrian Safety and Parking Operations.

Ms. Mazo said to keep Traffic Operations as a separate item because she believes the committee should also comment on easing traffic flow to bring more commuters to the area. Just add language to tie it into the other points mentioned.

Ms. Mazo suggested a separate letter stressing communication with WMATA is needed.

Mr. Wexler asked that the County Executive and Council look into all available funding sources.

Ms. Mazo asked that 'transportation and mass transit' be changed to just 'mass transit,' because she believes that the reference to transportation may also refer to roads which are not the Committee's mission.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the language of the FY11 Budget Priorities.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting date: Feb. 11, 2010

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Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
Attendance Sheet
January 14, 2010

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Martin Atkinson	M&T Bank	X	
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online		X
Samantha Mazo / Co-chair	Linowes and Blocher LLP	X	
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Charles Segerman	North & West Sector Plan Area		X
Andrew Wexler / Co-chair	CBD Resident	X	
Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Rukiyat Gilbert	Southern Management Co.	X	
Everton Latty	iDeal Decisions, Inc.	X	
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc. of N. America		X
Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems	X	
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (4)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Christine McGrew	M-NCPPC	X	
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police		X
Staff			
Terrie O'Steen	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Nakengi Byrd	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services		X
Guests			
Mel Tull	SS Regional Center	X	

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